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## REMODELING THE COMMONPLACE HOME.—II.

## THE DRAWING-ROOM.

BY EDWARD LEE YOUNG.



ANY people think in orderly sequence starting at the beginning of things, and come to a conclusion that is founded on well thought out reasons, while others instinctively jump at quite as good a conclusion, but are lost in the effort to reason out in their own minds how they got there.

A sketch, showing a room after an alteration has been made, is accepted by the latter people as an answer to their wishes, but, not being able to see how their commonplace room could be so treated, they

give up the effort and do nothing.

Because of this, we have thought it quite necessary to show a sketch of the room before anything has been done toward remodeling. Not by way of comparison, but that one of the possibilities in the way of changes that the room is capable of may be shown.

Entering from the hall to the drawing-room we all know the proportions of this room. The two front windows, starting from the floor, reach nearly to the cornice. The strong, black walnut lines of the trim surrounding each window seem to make them taller and more objectionable, particularly when the long, stringy curtains give emphasis. The marble mantel, with the gilt mirror frame over same, were good in their time, but no longer admissible. The opening to the back parlor, made high to admit light to the room beyond, is out of scale with the room.

The doorway through which we entered the room, while narrower, is also too high, both of them strongly outlined with the black walnut trim.

A seemingly hopeless room, a corner showing the mantel and window, is here shown in sketch No. 1.

The room is too high for its width. No imposing effect could ever be given this room, even with the expenditure of unlimited money.

Grandeur is out of the question, and if attempted would be ludicrous.

The ceiling is too high, and to lower it seems a great task, but it is easily done.

In sketch No. 2 the change of scale of proportions is due to the fact that by lowering the ceiling two feet everything is thrown into correct relation with one another. The room is better in every way, and by keeping the scale of ornament smaller a very desirable result is attained.

Where the new ceiling cuts across the windows, the only effort to mask in the work is to correct the appearance from the outside, which is done by putting in a carved grille from the ceiling to the top of the window.

As the ceiling cuts across the doors the space is filled in from the hall and rear room side with a grille; or, better still, by lowering the doors to suit the new ceiling.

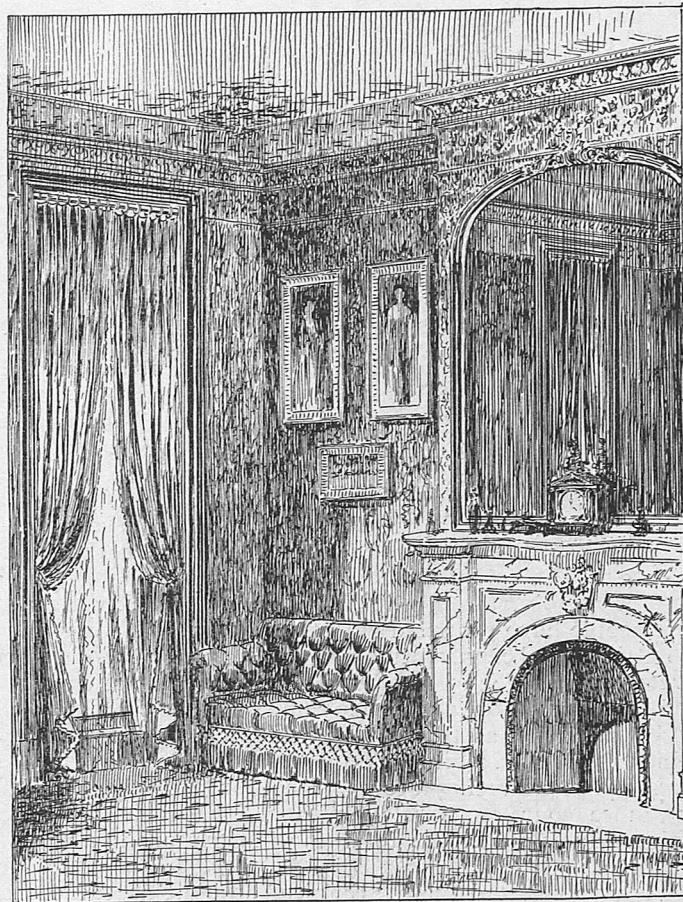
The new mantel is made of white wood, and decorated with composition. The glass above fits in between the pilasters apparently without a frame. The value of this way of treating a mirror is, of course, in its reflective and enlarging qualities—I should also say its deceptive qualities.

The construction of the ceiling is very simple, for it is made of light box beams bolted together and suspended from the old ceiling joist. The ceiling panels between the beams are made of relief composition work in thin but strong panels, held in place by an ornamental moulding. The entire woodwork of the room is decorated with composition work glued in place.

All the woodwork of the room is enameled in old ivory effect, the ornamental mouldings stained with a thin coat of burnt sienna and wiped off, then gilded. The walls are hung with a silk effect paper of a light blue tint.

The furniture covered with silk tapestry in stronger colors. The window curtains, plain Venetian velvet embroidered with gold.

Apparently the most expensive alteration is the lowering the ceiling, but such is not the case. The ceiling is made fitted together complete at the shop of the carpenter or cabinet-maker, as the case may be, and finished, enameled,



DRAWING-ROOM BEFORE REMODELING.

rubbed and gilded. This is done easily and cheaply at the shop. The sections are then unbolted and taken to the house. Two of the beams run across the room in lengths. Blocks every three feet apart are screwed on the ceiling over these two beams to the ceiling joist, and from these blocks supports are screwed long enough to reach from the ceiling to these beams and screwed to them. From these two beams and the cornice mouldings the entire ceiling is supported, for the ends of all beams are bolted to each other, the decorated plaster panels laid in and fastened, and the ceiling is done.

The visitor on entering this room is at once impressed with the home-like feeling, and, with a constantly changing interest, inspects the ornamental detail, and decorative effects which enrich but do not intrude.

A picture, when painted by an artist, is considered good if the "color" is right, and it is better if it has good "color" and "drawing;" but it becomes a masterpiece if, together with color and drawing, the "composition" is good.

Why should not the same hold good regarding a room? It does, and while the walls, ceilings and floors are but backgrounds for the furniture, pictures and people, they are as important in a room as for the same purpose in a painting.

The artist makes his backgrounds to paint from by arranging the corners and walls of his studio to bring out or subdue the values of light and shade or color of his model, to emphasize what is best.

There is no reason why these decorative features could not be applied to many places throughout a house, not necessarily in every room, but where most effective.

Women instinctively appreciate the true value of these accessories, and with their knowledge of complementary colors do that with color that is right for themselves.

Other women have a like knowledge and resent these effects if they are not their complement.



The decorator's services are here in demand, and with the neutral colors produce the required effects, which please everybody.

The corner shown in sketch No. 2 has not been treated with all the possible effect that it is capable of, for my object was not to show decoration so much as proportions.

Color is also a strong factor in these effects, and while the pen may sometimes describe color in words, it cannot do so in lines.

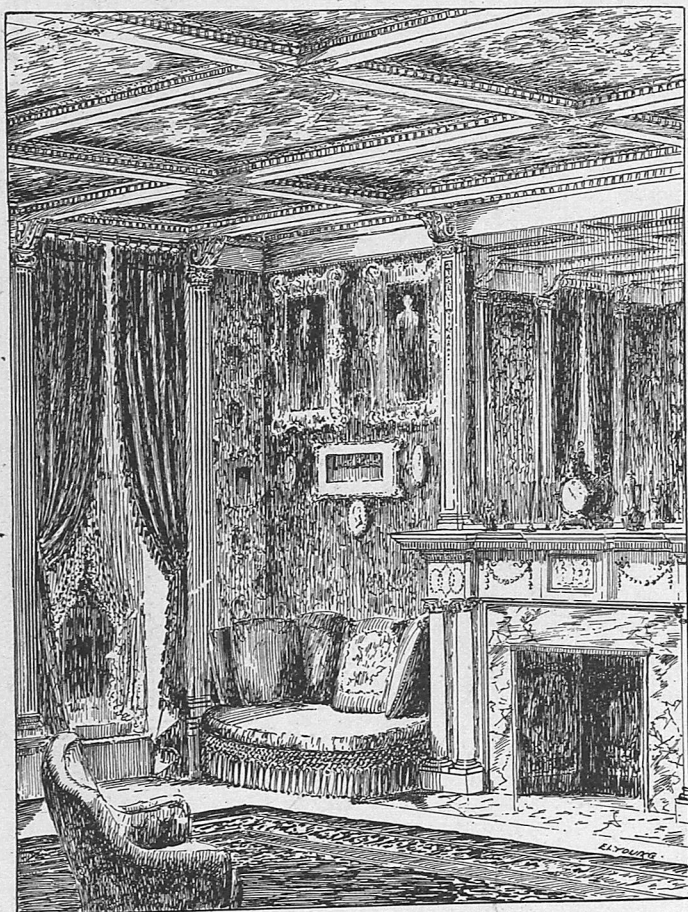
In decorating a room such as this one, the result (as best I can describe it) should be a glow of the prevailing color, should be felt rather than seen.

At night the room should be lighted from the sides rather than the centre, for the reason that the effect is better for and more satisfactory to both men and women.

I hesitate a moment before giving my reason for this statement, for it is a matter of personal observation only.

As one grows older the lines of age come across the face, not vertically. The top-light of a centre chandelier or electrolier shining across these lines brings them out in bolder relief than does the side light.

As people like themselves best when they realize that they are looking their best, it is the duty as well as the pleasure of the host to provide those effects pleasing to all, and a successful room is one in which it is a pleasure for everyone to visit and be entertained in. A popular room has done many things for a house and its owners.



DRAWING-ROOM AFTER REMODELING.

#### CONCERNING THE FIREPLACE.

These great open fireplaces from which, as you sit on the settle inside, you can see the sky through the wide chimney, have, from a modern point of view, many objections. Even sitting close to the fire, while your face is scorched, and your clothes perfumed by the wood smoke, your back gets cold from the tremendous draught, and a roaring fire must be kept up to throw much heat out into the room.

But while the forests lasted and logs could be got for burning, they answered well enough, and, at any rate, secured ample ventilation, and then our ancestors were hardy, and could stand draughts.

#### ENGLISH MANTELPieces.—I.

By E. PRIOLEAU WARREN.



Of all the important features of a room the fireplace is, perhaps, the most important, artistically and practically speaking, in England, with a chilly average temperature especially so. The sixteenth century was, perhaps, *par excellence*, the age of chimneypieces—in England, at any rate, for it was the age of exuberant carving. And it was at the end of its first quarter that the classical Renaissance began to get real hold upon English art, producing at first a blend or medley, hybrid, it is true, but almost always picturesque. This blend, or English early Renaissance, is known as the "Elizabethan" style.

The beginning of the sixteenth century is characterized by what is called the Tudor, or late Gothic style. The chimneypieces of this style differ little in essentials from those of the latter end of the preceding century which I have noticed.

The fireplace in Coulston's house, Bristol, is a good example. The form of the shields shows the beginning of the Renaissance feeling. Those of any importance were generally characterized by the depressed arch, as in the Magdalen College example, and frequently bore, above the opening, coats of arms or carved panels.

In large halls the opening was sometimes of extreme width and considerable depth, so that two or three people could sit inside the arch upon benches or settles, and warm themselves at the log fire on the hearth.

In small houses—farmhouses and the like—the fireplace of the kitchen, which was always also the living-room of the house, formed almost a small room of itself. It was flanked by walls extending into the room, or built in an angle of the room, with a wide arch overhead, and sometimes even with a window pierced through the outer wall. Settles were placed inside this ingle nook, as it is called. Many instances of this form of fireplace exist, and they are of all dates, from this period till about the middle of the last century, or perhaps later, and are found all over England and Wales, but are commoner in the North of England than elsewhere.

The succeeding "Jacobean" style differs so little from the "Elizabethan" that, though it probably belongs to the seventeenth century, I will speak of it here before noticing sixteenth century work in other countries. It is, upon the whole, ruder than the Elizabethan work; the carving shows a distinct falling off in delicacy and refinement of form, but it is generally picturesque and pleasing from its quaintness.

Jacobean fireplaces are quite common in all parts of England, and are oftentimes of considerable size and pretension in smallish houses.

A very characteristic example of a Jacobean fireplace in a small house is that from Kingston-on-Thames. The quaint, rudely-carved oaken mantel, and stumpy fluted oak pilaster below, enclosing the stone jamb, and the head with its quaintly cut frieze, are extremely typical of the period.

Before quitting the subject of English Elizabethan and Jacobean fireplaces, I should wish to draw your attention to the fact that from the beginning of the sixteenth century many Italian artists were employed in England to execute various works in marble, stone and plaster, and to instruct English workmen in the Italian Renaissance style then in vogue. The revival of classical literature went hand-in-hand with the revival of classical art. There was a great desire amongst men of wealth and cultivation to be in correct taste. It was the fashion to patronize the arts; in a word, to be *dilettante*. Italy was the home and cradle of Renaissance art, and its professors were accordingly invited to our shores. This fact accounts for the entirely Italian works one so often discovers in English churches or mansions, sometimes the actual work of Italian hands, sometimes of those of English disciples. Fireplaces, as a matter of course, shared the attention of these Italian artists.